

Innovation Schools Information Session

Executive Office of Education
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

What is an Innovation School?

- An Innovation School is an ***in-district public school that can operate with increased autonomy and flexibility*** related to the following areas: 1) curriculum; 2) budget; 3) school schedule and calendar; 4) staffing policies and procedures; 5) district policies; and 6) professional development.
- Innovation Schools receive the ***same per-pupil allocation as other district schools***, and operators can raise additional funding from public or private sources.
- An Innovation School may be established as a ***new school or as a conversion of an existing school***.
- The ***approval process is entirely locally based***; an Innovation School must be authorized by the local school committee (there is no formal state involvement in the authorization of these schools).

Who can start an Innovation School?

- **Eligible applicants:**

- Parents
- Teachers
- Parent-teacher organizations
- Principals and superintendents
- Teacher Unions
- School committees
- Colleges and universities
- Non-profit community-based or business organizations
- Non-profit charter school operators or education management organizations
- Educational collaboratives
- Consortia of these groups
- Other non-profit entities authorized by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

How do I start an Innovation School?

Six Steps to Approval

1. The applicant prepares a **prospectus** and submits it to the superintendent, who convenes a **screening committee** that includes the superintendent, a school committee member, and a representative from the local teachers' union.
2. After 2/3 of the screening committee approves the prospectus, the applicant forms an **innovation plan committee** (comprised of a wide array of stakeholders). This committee develops the **innovation plan** for the school (the plan must include **annual, measurable goals**).
3. With majority approval of the innovation plan committee, the innovation plan for a **conversion school** is reviewed and voted on by the **current faculty in an existing school**. For a **new school**, if the innovation plan includes any proposed waivers/modifications to the collective bargaining agreement, they must be **negotiated by the appropriate parties**.

How do I start an Innovation School?

4. After **2/3 of the current faculty** in a proposed conversion school approves the innovation plan, it is submitted to the school committee for final review. For a new school, the plan is submitted after negotiations are successfully completed (if necessary).
5. The school committee must hold **at least one public hearing** to discuss the proposed innovation plan.
6. The school committee, upon a majority vote, can **authorize the Innovation School for a period of up to five years**.

Each school will be evaluated at least annually by the local superintendent.

Based on school performance, the school committee can change components of the innovation plan, terminate the authorization of the school, or renew the school for another five years.

What resources are available?

- The Executive Office of Education (EOE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) have secured several grants and are in the process of securing a third.
 - Race to the Top grant: \$1.5 million
 - Private donations: \$105,000
 - Potential foundation grant: \$650,000

RTTT Funding

Type of RTTT Funding	Amount of Funding	Deadlines
Planning grants will be awarded to eligible applicants and participating districts that have successfully completed the first step of the Innovation School authorization process, the approval of an initial prospectus.	\$10,000 - \$25,000 based on the size of the proposed school and the scope of the initiatives	Round 1: January 15, 2011 Round 2: October 15, 2011
Implementation grants will be awarded to eligible applicants and participating districts that have successfully completed the last step of the authorization process, the establishment of the Innovation School by the local school committee.	\$50,000 - \$75,000 based on the size of the proposed school and the scope of the initiatives	Round 1: June 30, 2011 Round 2: June 30, 2012

For more information...

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